

C. Remarks

The claims are 14-20, with claims 14 and 18 being independent. Claims 18-20 have been withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 1, 3-7, and 10-13 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 14 has been amended to better define the present invention. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, in the substitute specification at page 9, lines 11-24. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the present claims is expressly requested.

Claims 1, 3-6, 10, 11 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious from U.S. Patent No. 6,231,744 B1 (Ying) and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0130311 A1 (Lieber). Claims 1, 7, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious from Ying, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0147801 A1 (Someya), and Glass Science (Doremus).

Since the rejected claims have been cancelled, these rejections are moot and should be withdrawn. Applicants reiterate that this action has been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter solely to expedite prosecution.

Claims 12 and 14-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious from Ying and Someya. The grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed.

Ying is directed to nanowire arrays and a process for their fabrication. Specifically, Ying discloses, at column 5, lines 14-47, that anodic alumina and mesoporous silica (MCM-41) are used as a template for producing thermoelectric semiconductors.

However, Ying does not disclose or suggest removing column-forming materials by selective etching of a phase-separated structure obtained by sputtering.

Someya is directed to a process for producing aligned carbon nanotube films by using a porous material. Specifically, this reference mentions a plurality of substrate materials for growing carbon nanotubes thereon, including silica, silica-alumina, alumina, etc. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Someya, like Ying, does not disclose or suggest removing column-forming materials by selective etching of a phase-separated structure obtained by sputtering as claimed.

In conclusion, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references, whether considered separately or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the presently claimed elements. Thus, the outstanding rejections should be withdrawn and the claims should be allowed.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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